DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 266 287 CE 043 572

TITLE	Displaced Homemaker's Guide to the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984.
INSTITUTION	Displaced Homemakers Network, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	[85]
NOTE	19p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Advocacy; Career Counseling; Career Guidance; Community Organizations; *Counseling Services; Disadvantaged; *Displaced Homemakers; Educational Cooperation; *Educational Legislation; *Educational Opportunities; Educational Research; *Federal Legislation; Financial Support; National Programs; Postsecondary Education; Program Content; Public Policy; Retraining; Sex Bias; Sex Discrimination; Sex Fairness; State Programs; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Carl D Perkins Vocational Education Act 1984

ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to familiarize displaced homemakers with the provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984. The first part of the guide details the act's funding for the following areas: sex equity coordinator, single parents and homemakers, sex bias and stereotyping, adult training and retraining, employment development, and career guidance and counseling. Discussed next are the act's provisions pertaining to state administration. The next section deals with various provisions of Title II of the act, including vocational education opportunities and vocational education program improvement, innovation, and expansion. Described next are special programs authorized in Title III (support for community-based organizations; consumer and homemaker education; adult training, retraining, and employment development; comprehensive career guidance and counseling; and industry-education partnership training in high-technology occupations). National programs authorized in Title IV (the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, cooperative demonstration education programs, and model centers for vocational education for older individuals) are described. Miscellaneous provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act are discussed, including programs for disadvantaged persons, coordination with the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), grants, supplanting (of state funds), failure to comply with the law, and local appeals. Concluding the guide is a list of steps that displaced homemaker advocates should take now regarding the act. (MN)

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Displaced Homemaker's Guide
To The
Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act
of 1984

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DISPLACED HOMEMAKER'S GUIDE TO THE CARL PERKINS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT

On October 19, 1984, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act was signed into law authorizing almost $115 million for sex equity and for job training and special services for adults, single parents and homemakers, including displaced homemakers. The new law, named for the late chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, would permit or require millions of additional dollars to be spent for training, research, demonstration programs and supportive services for single parents, homemakers and women seeking nontraditional jobs.

The Displaced Homemakers Network worked with other national women's groups for several years on passage of this legislation. The Network is making this guide to its provisions available for those who administer school and community-based displaced homemaker programs, those who will implement it at the state level, and those who are simply concerned that vocational education serve all women and girls more equitably and adequately.

SUMMARY

The Perkins Act includes the following specific set-asides of funds for sex equity and women's job training and special services:

Sex Equity Coordinator. The act renews and strengthens the requirement that states have at least one employee who works full-time on sex equity. Funding is increased to $60,000 and the coordinator is given responsibility for administering the programs for single parents and homemakers and overcoming sex bias described below.

Single Parents and Homemakers.*a $68.5 million is authorized for vocational education and supportive services for single parents and homemakers, with special emphasis on displaced homemakers. Programs may be carried out by community based organizations.

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*a The Act defines a single parent as a person who is unmarried or legally separated from a spouse and has a minor child or children for which the parent has either custody or joint custody. A homemaker is defined as a person who, as an adult, has worked "primarily without remuneration to care for the home and family, and for that reason has diminished marketable skills." Displaced homemakers fall thin this description.

Sex Bias and Stereotyping. $28.2 million is authorized to assist girls and women entering nontraditional fields and to provide supportive services. The sex equity coordinator may waive the age requirement that programs be for girls and women 14 to 25.

Adult Training, Retraining and Employment Development. One-half the funds authorized for this program, or $17.5 million, is to be used for programs for single parents and homemakers, including displaced homemakers and single heads of household entering or re-entering the workforce.

Career Guidance and Counseling. $200,000, or 20 percent of the funds appropriated for guidance and counseling, are to be used to eliminate bias and stereotyping based on sex, age and race and to increase access for special populations,*b including women.

A detail description of these programs and others that benefit displaced homemakers, as well as their administration, is provided below.

FUNDING

Congress authorized $950 million for fiscal year 1985 to carry out the law's state, local and national programs, and "such sums as may be necessary" for subsequent years. (The authorization constitutes a ceiling or maximum amount Congress may appropriate for a program during its annual budget process.) However, in the months before Congress passed the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, Congress appropriated $735 million based on the prior vocational education legislation. This figure, $735 million, is 77 percent of the new authorization. The figures given in this paper are authorization levels ($950 million); actual expenditures are expected to be lower.

It should also be noted that the Act permits states to reserve 7 percent of the funds authorized for administration. An additional 13 percent may be retained for statewide activities and thus could reduce the amount of money available for direct services.

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*b The term special populations in this act usually refers to single parents and homemakers (including displaced homemakers), persons seeking nontraditional jobs, adults who need training or retraining, the disadvantaged, the handicapped and criminal offenders. It also sometimes refers to women generally, older persons and racial minorities.

STATE ADMINISTRATION

Almost 97 percent of the funds authorized under the Act are passed to the states on a formula basis and administered by state educational agencies. Provisions for state administration of special interest to displaced homemakers are described in this section.

Sex Equity Coordinator

States were first required in the 1976 Vocational Education Act (VEA) amendments to employ at least one person to work full-time on sex equity. The Perkins Act enhances the position in several ways:

- The sex equity coordinator is given responsibility for administering the programs for single parents and homemakers and to overcome sex bias and stereotyping.
- Funds for the office are increased from $50,000 to $60,000 (to come from the state's 7 percent set-aside for administration).
- The act specifies that the coordinator must work in the state agency which administers vocational programs.

The sex equity coordinator's other responsibilities remain largely the same as in the 1976 act:

- Gathering, analyzing and disseminating data on the adequacy and effectiveness of vocational programs in meeting the employment needs of women and on the status of male and female students in vocational education.
- Reviewing programs for sex bias and stereotyping, with particular attention to practices which inhibit women's entry into high technology jobs; also, assessing the state's progress in overcoming sex discrimination and stereotying.
- Reviewing the state board's proposed actions on grants, contracts and policies to ensure that the needs of women are addressed.
- Developing recommendations for outreach programs for women about vocational education and employment opportunities, including careers in technical fields and new and emerging occupations.

- Providing technical assistance to local educational agencies, postsecondary institutions and other interested parties in expanding vocational opportunities for women.

- Assisting administrators, instructors and counselors in implementing programs and activities to increase access for women (including displaced homemakers and single heads of household) to vocational education and to increase nontraditional enrollments.

The new act makes it clear that the sex equity coordinator must work full-time on the functions of the position delineated by the Vocational Education Act.

State Plans

To obtain funds, the state board must submit to the Secretary of Education by May 1, 1985, a three-year plan for administering programs under the Act. (Two-year plans are required thereafter.) Among other provisions, the state plan must include:

- The proposed use of federal funds.

- (1) An assessment of special population groups' needs for vocational education programs and services, and (2) an assessment of secondary and postsecondary institutions' capacity to meet those needs.

- An assessment, for each fiscal year covered by the plan, of how programs supported under the Perkins Act will meet the identified needs of special population groups.

- An assurance the state will provide appropriate training for men and women who want to enter nontraditional jobs.

- The sex equity coordinator's recommendations for programs and policies to overcome sex bias and stereotyping and his or her analysis of the state's progress in overcoming sex discrimination in vocational education.

The state is required to hold public hearings ("after appropriate and sufficient notice") so interested individuals and groups can present their views on the state's vocational programs and submit recommendations on the state plan. Summaries of the public's recommendations and the state's response to them must be included in the plan.

The development of the state plan is the critical phase in determining what kinds of displaced homemaker programs and services the state will support and how much money it will allocate to them. The state plan hearings provide advocates for women with an important opportunity to tell the state what kinds of services are needed and to make specific recommendations on the uses of federal and state funds to provide the services.

State Council on Vocational Education

The 13 members of the state council on vocational education, appointed by the governor or the state board of education, should include at least one person knowledgeable about the special educational and career development needs of special populations. The council's responsibilities include analyzing the distribution of funds for vocational education, and

reporting to the state board the extent to which special populations are provided with equal access to vocational education.

The state board is required to consult with the state council on the development of the state plan. If the council objects to the plan, its objections must be forwarded to the Department of Education, which will consider them in deciding whether to approve the plan.

Because it has input into the development of the state plan and is responsible for evaluating programs' accessibility to single parents and homemakers, the state council can be an ally in advocating better services for displaced homemakers.

Title II -- BASIC STATE GRANT FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Eighty-five percent of the Act's FY 1985 authorization ($806.1 million) is in the basic state grant for vocational education. The basic grant is divided between two parts, with Part A (Vocational Education Opportunities) receiving 57 percent, or $459.5 million, and Part B (Vocational Education Program Improvement, Innovation and Expansion) receiving 43 percent ($346.6 million). Most of the earmarked money for displaced homemakers, sex equity and other programs primarily of benefit to women is in Part A.

Part A funds may be used to maintain or improve existing programs, as well as start new ones. Part B can only be used for existing programs when funds can be shown to improve or expand them.

Part A: Vocational Education Opportunities

Part A provides special vocational education programs and services to enhance the participation of population groups who (1) have traditionally been underserved in vocational education, and/or (2) have special needs which must be met for them to succeed in vocational education. These groups include single parents and homemakers, adults in need of training or retraining, persons in programs to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping, the disadvantaged, the handicapped and criminal offenders.

The state must allocate 80 percent of the funds to local programs (which may include state-administered vocational schools). Of the 20 percent maintained at the state level, up to 7 percent may be used for administration. Funds for adult training must be matched by state and local dollars, but federal funds for single parents/homemakers and sex equity may be used to pay 100 percent of the cost of the programs and services provided.

Single Parents and Homemakers

Of the basic grant ($68.5 million in FY 1985), 8.5 percent is authorized for:

- Vocational education and training activities, including basic literacy instruction and educational materials, to furnish single parents and homemakers with marketable skills.
- Grants to school systems and postsecondary institutions to expand vocational education services when this expansion would directly increase the recipient's capacity to provide single parents and homemakers with marketable skills.
- Child care, transportation and organization and scheduling of programs so they are more accessible to singe parents and homemakers.
- Dissemination of information about vocational education and support services.

In allocating funds for single parents and homemakers, the state must emphasize assistance to "individuals with the greatest financial need and that in serving homemakers the State will give special consideration to homemakers who because of divorce, separation, or the death or disability of a spouse must prepare for paid employment." (S113(b)(7) States will determine the manner in which they will comply with the definition of homemaker.

States may make grants to community based organizations (CBOs) which have "demonstrated effectiveness in providing comparable or related services to single parents and homemakers." In making grants to CBOs, the state is to take into account the organization's past performance in terms of cost and quality of training. This provides a special opportunity for displaced homemaker programs that operate as community based organizations. In the past, vocational education funds have only supported programs located at or operated by educational institutions.

Adult Training and Retraining

Twelve percent of basic funds ($96.7 million in FY 1985) are authorized to "provide, improve and expand adult and postsecondary vocational education services and activities to train and retrain adults."

Programs may be developed in coordination with the state agency which administers Title III of JTPA.

Activities to Eliminate Sex Bias and Stereotyping

Of the authorization for basic grants ($28.2 million in FY 85) 3.5 percent is to be used for "programs, services and activities to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping in secondary and postsecondary vocational education." The state is given broad discretion in deciding what kinds of programs and activities it will support with these funds, but two types of programs are specifically mentioned:

- Vocational education programs, services and activities designed to enable girls and women aged 14 to 25 to support themselves and their families. Congress emphasized that the intent of this part is to provide supplemental activities to meet the special needs of girls and women who want to enter nontraditional occupations or other fields enhancing their career opportunities. The sex equity coordinator can waive the age limitation whenever he or she "determines that the waiver is essential to meet the objectives of this section."

- Support services for persons participating in programs designed to overcome sex bias and stereotyping, including dependent care and transportation.

Part B: Vocational Education Program Improvement, Innovation and Expansion

Part B authorizes 24 uses of funds from categories broad enough to include almost any vocational education program or activity. Permissible expenditures may include:

- Improvement and expansion of postsecondary and adult vocational education, including upgrading the skills of displaced homemakers and single heads of household.
- Support for the sex equity coordinator.
- Stipends for students who have acute economic needs that cannot be met by work-study programs.
- Placement services for students who have completed vocational education.
- Day care for children of secondary and postsecondary students.
- Supplemental funding for programs initiated under Part A.

Programs funded under Part B are to be of sufficient size, scope and quality to meet the needs of the students involved.

Special Note About Community Based Organizations. The state may contract with community based organizations to provide any of the services or programs in Title II. In fact, the state is directed to use CBOs "to the extent feasible" in areas where vocational programs and facilities do not adequately meet the needs of the disadvantaged or where the CBO can better serve disadvantaged students. CBOs are to of "demonstrated effectiveness" and include those eligible for funding under JTPA, including displaced homemaker programs.

States are to develop criteria for awarding VEA funds to CBOs.

TITLE III: SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Title III is divided into five parts with authorizations for community based organizations to operate programs for economically disadvantaged youth; consumer and homemaking education; adult training, retraining and employment development; career guidance and counseling, and industry-education partnerships for training in high-technology occupations.* These parts--to the extent that

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* Each program authorized in Title II is assured of receiving a set percentage of the annual appropriation for Title II. Under Title III, however, there is a separate authorization for each part. Congress could reduce or eliminate the appropriation for one part of Title III without affecting the others.

Except where noted, state and local educational agencies are not required to match federal expenditures for Title III programs.

they address sex equity and single parents and homemakers--are discussed below.

Part A: Support for Community Based Organizations

This part authorizes $15 million in FY 1985 for CBO programsthat "enhance the enrollment of severely economically and educationally disadvantaged youth." Although nothing precludes CBOs serving displaced homemakers from applying for funds from this part, the CBO must provide a written assurance in its application that it will "give special consideration to the needs of severely economically and educationally disadvantaged youth ages sixteen through twenty-one." Programs must be developed in collaboration with the local educational agency.

Part B: Consumer and Homemaker Education

Displaced homemakers are not mentioned in Part B, which carries an FY 1985 authorization of $32 million. However, displaced homemakers are a natural audience for many of the authorized activities. For example, funds may be used to develop and improve instruction and curricula relating to managing personal and family resources, managing home and work responsibilities, conserving limited resources and applying consumer and homemaker education skills to jobs and careers. Funds are also available for demonstration programs and research.

At lease one-third of funds must be spent in economically depressed areas or areas with high unemployment to assist consumers and improve the quality of family life.

Part C: Adult Training, Retraining and Employment Development

Of the funds authorized for this part ($35 million of FY 1985), one-half are set aside for single parents and homemakers. (There is a $30 million ceiling on this allocation if appropriations for Part C go higher than $60 million in subsequent years.)

Displaced homemakers and single heads of household entering or reentering the workforce are specifically designated to be served under Part C, as are workers 55 and older. The authorized activities and services include those already commonly engaged in by displaced homemaker programs:

- Short-term programs to upgrade skills.
- Training programs designed cooperatively with employers, including institutional and workside programs, apprenticeships, and customized training for industries.

- Entrepreneurship programs in establishing and operating small businesses.

- Recruitment, job search assistance, counseling, remedial services and information to encourage and assist males and females in taking advantage of vocational education, with particular attention to reaching women and older workers.

Funds also can be used to support:

- Pilot projects and curriculum development.

- Costs related to serving adults in other vocational programs.

- Related instruction for apprentices.

Part C offers the opportunity for vocational schools to institutionalize supportive services and other activities for displaced homemakers. The Act requires that programs funded under Part C make maximum use of existing facilities and strengthen institutional capacity to meet the needs of those served, including displaced homemakers and other single parents and homemakers. They should also involve cooperation with the public and private sector and other agencies involved in training and economic development. Programs are to coordinate with programs for dislocated workers under Title III of JTPA to provide, to the extent feasible, "an integrated an on-going program of training and services."

Part D: Comprehensive Career Guidance and Counseling

20 percent of the authorization for guidance and counseling ($1 million in FY 1985) is to be used for activities to eliminate sex, race and age bias in counseling and career guidance and to make programs accessible to women and other special population groups.

All programs funded under Part D are to encourage the elimination of bias and stereotyping and to be accessible for women. Funds may be used for programs which assist persons to:

- Acquire self-assessment, career decision-making and employability skills.

- Make the transition from education and training to work.

- Develop skills for emerging technologies and jobs with worker shortages.

- Develop mid-career job search skills.
- Obtain information about vocational and postsecondary education and job training.

Funds also may be used for training counselors and support personnel, developing curriculum and counseling materials, and con- ducting research and demonstration projects. Although the amount of money is small, its impact could be increased by carefully targeted use to reach a large number of student--for example, con- ducting statewide workshops for counselors on outreach and counseling for displaced homemakers, or developing a handbook for counselors working with re-entry women.

Part E: Industry-Education Partnership Training In High-Technology Occupations

The purpose of this part, authorized at $20 million, is to create partnerships between vocational education institutions and private businesses to train students in high-technology occupa- tions. Federal funds can make up no more than half the costs of programs, and at least half the non-federal share must come from participating businesses.

Congress made it clear that women, as well as minorities, the handicapped and the economically disadvantaged, are to have access to programs funded under Part E. In considering applications, the state is directed to give special consideration to whether the applicant has shown a commitment to serving women and other special populations "as demonstrated by special efforts to provide outreach, information, and counseling, and by the provision of remedial instruction and other assistance."

Programs and activities funded under Title II--particularly supportive services--are to be coordinated with those funded under Part E. Thus, supportive services for displaced homemakers funded under Title II can be coordinated with training for high techno- logy jobs funded under Part E. Other services to assure partici- pation by women may also be funded.

Part E programs also are to be carried out in coordination with JTPA.

TITLE IV: NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Several programs administered at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Education are of interest to displaced homemakers:

Research

$16.7 million is authorized for research, including research on providing quality vocational education to special populations (single parents and homemakers, men and women in nontraditional fields, and adults.)

National Center for Research in Vocational Education

The act reauthorizes the National Center for Research in Vocational Education and authorizes it to carry out research on effective methods for providing quality vocational education for special populations--including single parents and homemakers, adults and men and women entering nontraditional fields. The center is also to provide technical assistance to programs serving special populations.

Cooperative Demonstration Education Programs

The Secretary is authorized to carry out model programs improving access to quality vocational education for special populations and men and women seeking nontraditional occupations.

Model Centers for Vocational Education for Older Individuals

The Department of Education is to award grants for the operation of model centers to provide vocational training and retraining, counseling and supportive services for persons 55 and older. The centers will provide assistance for later life career changes, with special emphasis on the needs of displaced homemakers.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS OF THE CARL PERKINS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT

Programs for the Disadvantaged

Part A of Title II sets aside 22 percent of the basic grant to pay the excess, or supplemental, costs of serving disadvantaged students. All funds for the disadvandaged are to be passed through to the local level and matched by the state or local educational agency. Although there are no specific references to single parents or homemakers in this part (disadvantaged persons are defined only as "those who have economic or academic disadvanteges and who require special services and assistance in order to enable them to succeed in vocational education"), nothing precludes the use of Part A funds for economically disadvantaged single parents and homemakers. In fact, at a time when poverty is overwhelmingly concentrated in families headed by single women, programs for the disadvantaged should include services to help single mothers improve their employment skills.

Coordination with JTPA

Throughout the act, Congress stressed that programs supported under it should be coordinated with the Job Training Partnership Act so that programs supplement rather than duplicate each other.

Grants

States may award multiple year grants to local education agencies based on effective dates of the state plan. The law requires the state to develop the plan for three years and then two years thereafter. Thus, grants for programs may be made for up to three years, then for up to two years.

Supplanting

Federal funds must supplement and increase the amount of state and local funds used for purpose. In no case is a state to use federal funds to supplant, or replace, state and local funds supporting a program.

Failure to Comply with the Law

If a state fails to comply with the Vocational Education Act or its state plan, the Secretary may withhold funds until compliance is reached.

Local Appeals

A local educational agency or postsecondary school which is dissatisfied with state action on its application for federal funds may appeal the state's decision to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

STEPS DISPLACED HOMEMAKER ADVOCATES SHOULD TAKE NOW REGARDING THE CARL PERKINS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT

The Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act took effect immediately upon its signing October 19, although this posed major problems with regard to its implementation:

> Although Congress gave the Department of Education only 90 days to write regulations for the act, states will have to begin development of their three-year state plans without the benefit of final regulations interpreting the law. Plans are due May 1.

> There is no appropriation for the new law. The $735 million FY 1985 appropriation for the 1976 Vocational Education Amendments will probably be adapted (by Congress or the Department of Education) to the Perkins Act, although funds are distributed differently under the two laws and they contain different programs. States will not know how much money they have for new programs until the funds are reallocated and until they find out whether Congress will pass a supplemental appropriation to bring appropriations closer to the authorization levels in the Perkins Act.

Moreover, both the proposed regulations (expected to be published in mid-January) and the reallocation of funds may be controversial, further complicating and delaying states' implementation of the act.

In spite of the confusion, most states should be moving now to implement the Perkins Act. The uncertainty about funding and final regulations at the federal level makes it all the more important that good decisions be made at the state level about the use of funds. Advocates for displaced homemakers should become involved now in monitoring development of the state plan and other procedures for implementing the Perkins Act at the state, local and federal level.

The following are actions you should take:

State Plans

Contact your state director of vocational education or sex equity coordinator to find out when and where state plan hearings will be held.

Testify at the hearing, providing specific, written recommendations on the kinds of services the state should offer displaced homemakers and other single heads of households and recommendations for the allocation of federal and state funds to meet their needs. If you can't appear in person at the hearing, ask state personnel how you can submit your testimony in writing.

Notify other women's groups and advocates for displaced homemakers about the hearings and urge them to testify. If possible, coordinate your testimony so that your recommendations complement and strengthen each other.

Sex Equity Coordinator

Develop a working relationship with the sex equity coordinator so that he or she is open to receiving your recommendations on the administration of displaced homemaker programs and notifies you when important policy decisions are being made.

Community Based Organizations

If you are with a community based organization, contact your state director of vocational education or sex equity coordinator to find out what criteria the state is developing for CBOs to receive VEA funds under Title II. Remember that JTPA-eligible displaced homemaker programs and other programs of demonstrated effectiveness in providing services to single parents and homemakers are eligible for Title II funds.

State Council on Vocational Education

Find out the process your state uses in appointing members to the State Council on Vocational Education. Support the appointment of persons knowledgeable about women's employment and training needs.

Participate in the council's annual public hearing.

Develop a working relationship with council members and staff so their evaluations of state services to displaced homemakers will have the benefit of your insights. Encourage them to become advocates for displaced homemaker programs in their evaluations, reports and reviews of state plans.

States will have substantially more funds for programs for displaced homemakers. Existing displaced homemaker programs should encourage state planning that builds upon current program services in an effort to develop comprehensive services for displaced homemakers. A program policy statement on comprehensive program services has been developed by the Displaced Homemakers Network and appears in the Appendix to this document.

Federal Regulations

How states implement the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act will be strongly affected by the Department of Education's regulations. It is probably by regulation, for example, that the decision will be made how to allocate funds for state administration--this determining the amount of money available for direct

services. Regulations should be monitored to assure that regulatory authority does not weaken statutory protections for special populations. Public comment on the Department's regulations will be critically important.

The Department expects to issue proposed regulations by January 17. The proposed regulations will be published in the Federal Register, and the public will have 60 days within which to submit written comments. In addition, the Department expects to hold five public hearings in various parts of the country to receive oral testimony. Final regulations are expected to be published in June.

The Displaced Homemakers Network will monitor Department plans to issue proposed regulations and develop guidelines or model comments to assist local programs in analyzing and commenting on them. After the first of January, displaced homemaker advocates should:

Be prepared to submit written comments on the proposed regulations if one is held in your area.

Plan to testify orally at public hearings on the regulations if one is held in your area.

Encourage other women's advocates to submit comments.

For information on the regulations and news about implementation of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, contact the Displaced Homemakers Network, 1010 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 817, Washington, D.C. 20005, 202/628-6767.

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The Network is the only national organization which addresses the specific concerns of displaced homemakers. Through its Washington office, it works to increase displaced homemakers' options for economic self-sufficiency, to provide information about of public policy issues which affect displaced homemakers, to provide technical assistance resources for service providers and to help program staff around the country locate the information and expertise they need to develop programs that work for displaced homemakers.

Network members include traditional service deliverers and displaced homemaker centers, state and federal agencies, equity specialists, private industry counsils, community colleges, vocational/technical institutes, employers, personnel directors, legislative offices, policymakers and opinion leaders, professionals from fields related to displaced homemakers, women's advocates, activists in the field of aging and displaced homemakers themselves.